# Incline Village man suspect in abuse case

Nicholas Lightfoot

**By Associated Press**

The attorney of a man wanted in a child abuse and domestic violence investigation in Incline Village said authorities did not have enough evidence to issue an arrest warrant.

On Friday, the Washoe County Sheriff's Office announced deputies were searching for 39-year-old Nicholas Lightfoot, of Incline Village, for his alleged involvement in the child abuse and domestic violence case.

"We stand by our press release," spokesman Bob Harmon said Friday. "Mr. Lightfoot is the suspect in an ongoing child abuse investigation, and therefore, should turn himself in immediately."

**Read the whole story**

# 3rd edition of MRG agreement before SLT council

**By Kathryn Reed**

At the May 15 South Lake Tahoe City Council meeting the electeds will be asked to spend $11,500 in taxpayer money on a contract that even the interim city attorney said she has questions with.

The council **earlier this month** discussed the bill from MRG. Consensus could not be reached on what to do.

Now the item is on Tuesday's consent agenda. This is where slam dunk issues usually are placed. However, it is possible for anyone – even a member of the public – to pull any consent item off for discussion.

What's different in the packet this time is that the October and November agreements from the firm are included. Only one was earlier this month.

A major difference is a new letter dated May 7 from Mary Egan, principal of MRG. It has revisions from the previous two documents. A major difference is the removal of language having to do with providing the city with written documentation of her work. The latest correspondence, which like the others was to interim City Attorney Nira Doherty, said, "I continue to agree not to discuss the scope or product of work, or my participation in it, with third parties."

What isn't known is if the deputy district attorney investigating the allegations of illegal activity being conducted during closed sessions by the electeds will want to interview Egan and if she would do so with or without a subpoena.

# Report: Climate change ruining Calif.’s environment

**By Peter Fimrite, San Francisco Chronicle**

Bigger, more intense forest fires, longer droughts, warmer ocean temperatures and an ever shrinking snowpack in the Sierra Nevada are “unequivocal” evidence of the ruinous domino-effects that climate change is having on California, a new California Environmental Protection Agency report states.

The 350-page report released Wednesday tracks 36 indicators of climate change, including a comprehensive list of human impacts and the effects on wildlife, the ocean, lakes, rivers and the mountains.

The study pulled together research from scientists, academia and research institutions and found that despite a marked downward trend in greenhouse-gas emissions in California, including a 90 percent drop in black carbon from tailpipe emissions over the past 50 years, CO2 levels in the atmosphere and in seawater are increasing at a steady rate.

**Read the whole story**

# El Dorado, Placer counties

# part of opioid lawsuit

**By Lake Tahoe News**

El Dorado and Placer counties have joined a lawsuit against opioid manufacturers and distributors because of the opioid epidemic. Thirty California counties are part of the legal matter in federal court.

The lawsuit calls for drug companies to end practices that have led to the epidemic and seeks legal damages for the taxpayer money spent by the counties to respond to the crisis.

More than 500 public entities have filed similar suits.

The complaint alleges that many of the nation's largest drug manufacturers misinformed doctors about the addictiveness and efficacy of opioids. Defendants named in the lawsuit include Purdue Pharma; Teva Ltd.; Janssen Pharmaceuticals Inc. (a wholly-owned subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson); Endo Health Solutions Inc.; Allergan PLC; and Mallinckrodt.

The lawsuit also names the nation's largest drug distributors – Cardinal Health, AmerisourceBergen and McKesson Corp. – which allegedly failed to monitor, identify and report suspicious opioid shipments to pharmacies, in violation of the federal Controlled Substances Act; as well as other large national distributors and retailers.

From 2008 to 2016, 87 El Dorado County and 93 Placer County residents died from opioid-associated overdose.

In El Dorado County, more than 183,000 opiate prescriptions were written in 2016 in a county with a population of approximately 184,000. The county had nine deaths attributable to opioid overdose, which is higher than the state average of 4.6 deaths per 100,000 residents.

In 2016 an estimated 5.1 percent of the population aged 12 and

older or 9,000 people, in the county misused opioids and approximately 1,600 had an opioid use disorder. In 2016, the county had a rate of 8.9 emergency department visits per 100,000 people due to opioid overdoses and 13.3 opioid overdose hospitalizations per 100,000 residents.

In 2016, in Placer County 14 people died from opiates. That year the rates of hospitalizations and emergency department visits due to opioids were higher than the statewide average.

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# Calif. tight power supplies not an issue in Tahoe

While California's electric grid operator this week said supplies could be in short supply this summer, that likely won't be the case for Liberty Utilities customers.

"Liberty Utilities is a winter-peaking utility, with our peak demand typically occurring between Christmas and New Year's. With milder temperatures during the day and cooler temperatures at night, Liberty Utilities' customer demand during the summer is not as great as utilities such as PG&E and SMUD that experience their peaks during the summer months," Travis Johnson, vice president of electric operations for Liberty, told *Lake Tahoe News.*

Liberty provides electricity for the California side of the lake, Truckee, Alpine County and other areas.

The California Independent System Operator, the grid operator, on May 9 said supplies could be limited because of below average hydropower production and reduced generation. This has to do with the snowpack in the Sierra being dismal this

winter.

Liberty gets most of its power from natural gas, with less than 10 percent coming from hydro.

“About 25 percent of our total power mix is from our own Luning Solar Energy Center dedicated entirely to our own customers. By this time next year, we will have another 10MW of solar energy in our mix when the Turquoise solar facility is completed. At that time, a full 30 percent of our energy will be from solar that Liberty produces itself,” Johnson said.

For the rest of the state, though, there could be rolling power outages.

*— Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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# Officials proclaim new level of wildfire danger

**By Kevin McCallu, Santa Rosa Press Democrat**

Fire officials gathered in Santa Rosa’s devastated Fountaingrove neighborhood Wednesday to implore residents of the entire state to prepare for what they fear will be another long, dangerous wildfire season.

Some 950 wildfires have burned more than 5,800 acres of California so far this year, and residents need to recognize that fire, as a result of a host of factors including climate change, is now a year-round threat, CalFire Director Ken Pimlott said.

**Read the whole story**

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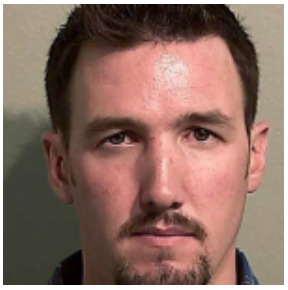
# 6-year prison sentence in Truckee rape case

A Truckee man is going to prison for six years for raping a woman last fall.



James Russell Ferrigno

James Russell Ferrigno, 32, pleaded guilty earlier this year to using an intoxicating substance before raping his roommate.

The victim was renting a room from Ferrigno on a platonic basis. She told police she suspected Ferrigno of putting a substance in her drink at night, which led her to set up a camera in the kitchen.

The victim was at the May 8 sentencing. She presented the court with a written statement: “I know that whenever Jim is eventually released out of custody, my life will change again. The sense of security I get from knowing he is behind bars will only last so long.”

*— Lake Tahoe News staff report*

# Brown signs order to reduce wildfire danger

**By Associated Press**

Gov. Jerry Brown signed an executive order on Thursday that aims to reduce the dangers of wildfires following some of the deadliest and most destructive blazes in state history.

The order calls for accelerating forest management procedures such as cutting back dense stands of trees and setting controlled fires to burn out thick brush. Brown wants to double the forest area managed by such practices to 500,000 acres (781 square miles) within five years.

Brown’s order also calls for streamlining the process of allowing private landowners to thin trees and encouraging the building industry to use more innovative wood products.

**Read the whole story**

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# SLT interim city manager expected to be hired

**By Kathryn Reed**

Dirk Brazil is expected to be the interim city manager of South Lake Tahoe.

According to the staff report for the May 15 City Council meeting, the rate of pay will be $103.85/hour, which equates to more than $16,000 a month. This is higher than what the electeds last month said they wanted to pay. They had agreed to a range of $14,583 to $15,833 a month.

Dirk Brazil

The staff report has no explanation how the higher rate came into being. It was human resources chief Tom Stuart who was negotiating with Brazil.

The contract is from June 4, with employment until a permanent city manager is hired.

Approval of the contract will mean taking $65,000 from assigned excess reserves to pay for the position through this fiscal year that ends Sept. 30.

Brazil was one of three people who interviewed for the job on April 30.

Most recently Brazil was city manager of Davis. Prior to that nearly three-year stint which ended in 2017, he was assistant county administrator for Yolo County from 2006-14. He has state experience working for Assembly members, was one of the deputy directors of the California Department of Fish and Game, and was policy director and deputy controller in the Gray Davis administration.

In his cover letter to the council he wrote, “Regardless of the policy area – cannabis, affordable housing/rental housing,

homelessness, economic development, sustainability, public finance, pubic art or labor negotiations – I bring an array of skill that will move the council's policy forward."

The opening came about after the council for undisclosed reasons severed ties with City Manager Nancy Kerry. They ultimately paid out her contract – all nine months – which means she was let go without cause.

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# No fish killed from 4,700+ gallon chemical spill

The driver of the rig that overturned was working for Watson Brothers Trucking out of Manteca. Photo/CDFWS

**By Kathryn Reed**

It is estimated that at least 4,700 gallons of a toxic chemical reached the West Fork of the Carson River after a tractor trailer crashed May 9 near Woodfords.

“The thinking is a lot of it went into the water. They just don’t have any specific number,” Scott Ferguson with Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control told *Lake Tahoe News.* Officials probably will never know the exact amount. Estimates are it could have been as much as 4,900 gallons.

The chemical was hypochlorite, a bleach-like substance. It had a concentration of 12.5 percent.

“The good news is so far there has not been any reports of any fish kill,” Ferguson said. “What is in the river is gone, meaning it has flowed on. There is nothing you can do once it gets into the water in this situation.”

Some of the remaining concerns are impacts to aquatic life, with trout the main species in the river; and then if any rain were to soak the contaminated soil and carry it into a waterway or spread it farther on land.

H2O Environmental is handling the soil removal. That likely isn’t going to start until Monday. Working with underground utilities is part of the delay in removing the soil. The site, which is near the Caltrans maintenance station in Woodfords, is being secured because of the incoming weather system.

Several agencies from California and Nevada are working together to resolve the contamination issue. They are in cleanup and assessment mode now, with any fines or recovery costs to be determined at a later date.

Lahontan, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, and California Fish and Wildlife Service were all at the site on Thursday taking samples. Alpine County and Caltrans are also involved.

Greg Brown, 46, of Oakland was driving east on Highway 88 west of Crystal Springs when he lost control, crossed into the westbound lane and overturned. According to the California Highway Patrol, the trailer detached and continued to overturn

up the embankment on the north side of the highway. The tank ruptured and the chemical spewed on to the road, dirt and then into a tributary of the Carson River.

“Due to his speed through curves the driver lost control,” the CHP report says of the 10am Wednesday incident.

Brown’s body was found in the cab of the truck hours later. The site had to be secured by hazmat crews before first responders were allowed in. It is not known if Brown died from the chemical release or the crash.